

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (cancelled)
2. (cancelled)
3. (currently amended) The storage system of claim 2 6 wherein
the administrative console sets policies that determine a predetermined minimum
number of storage nodes in the group; and
the storage coordinator selects at least the predetermined minimum number of
nodes for each of the respective groups.
4. (currently amended) The storage system of claim 2 6 wherein
the administrative console provides to the storage coordinator policies that
determine the locations of at least one of the nodes in a group relative to the other nodes
in the group, and
the storage coordinator selects the nodes for the respective groups in accordance
with the applicable policies concerning location.
5. (currently amended) The storage system of claim 2 6 in which the storage
coordinator is a member of a cluster of storage coordinators that communicate peer-to-
peer and share the managing of the file storage on the plurality of file storage nodes.
6. (currently amended) ~~The storage system of claim 2 further including~~ A distributed
network storage system including
a plurality of file storage nodes that are distributed on and communicate peer-to-
peer over the network;
a storage coordinator that manages file storage on the plurality of files storage
nodes, the storage coordinator designating selected groups of nodes within the plurality

of file storage nodes and directing the nodes in a given group to communicate peer-to-peer to replicate associated group files;

a plurality of remote file storage nodes that communicate peer-to-peer over the network;

a remote storage coordinator that manages file storage on the plurality of remote file storage nodes, the storage coordinator designating selected groups of nodes within the plurality of remote file storage nodes and directing the nodes in a given group to communicate peer-to-peer to replicate associated group files; ~~and~~

an administrative console that administers policies set by a system administrator;

the administrative console providing policies to the storage coordinator;

the storage coordinator designating the groups in accordance with the policies provided by the administrative console; and

the administrative console providing policies to the remote storage coordinator that govern the operations of the remote storage coordinator.

7. (original) The system of claim 6 wherein the storage coordinator and the remote storage coordinator respectively designate groups that include both file storage nodes and remote file storage nodes.

8. (currently amended) The system of claim ~~2~~ 6 wherein the storage coordinator manages distributed searches of files stored in the system by designating a selected node from each group to search through the respective group files, the storage coordinator accumulating the search results from the selected nodes and providing the results to a requesting node.

9. (original) The system of claim 8 wherein the storage coordinator further designates selected nodes that are near neighbors of the requesting node to supply to the requesting node one or more files requested from the search results.

10. (currently amended) The system of claim ~~2~~ 6 wherein

the administrative console provides policies for access to various types of files;
and

the storage coordinator creates different types of storage lockers for files
associated with different access policies and assigns all or portions of a given storage
locker to one or more of the selected groups of nodes.

11. (original) The storage system of claim 10 wherein the administrative console
provides policies for the different types of lockers, and the storage coordinator manages
the respective locker in accordance with the policies.

12. (original) The storage system of claim 10 wherein the storage coordinator
maintains file allocation tables for the respective lockers.

13. (original) The storage system of claim 12 wherein the nodes provide entries for
the respective file allocation tables, the entries including links to the physical location of
the respective files.

14. (original) The storage system of claim 13 wherein a given table entry includes a
file Id that consists of a storage group Id, a node Id and an associated message number.

15. (currently amended) The storage system of claim ~~2~~ 6 wherein the administrative
console provides to the storage coordinator replication operation policies that relate to
one or more of time constraints, interval constraints, and bandwidth constraints, and
the storage coordinator manages the replication operations in accordance with the
provided policies.

16. (original) The storage system of claim 15 wherein a given node performs the
replication operation by segmenting a given file into segments and sending a series of
numbered messages that contain file segments to the other nodes in the associated group.

17. (original) The storage system of claim 12 wherein the nodes compress the files before replicating the files.

18. (original) The storage system of claim 17 wherein the nodes encrypt the files before compressing the files.

19. (currently amended) The system of claim ~~4~~ 6 wherein the nodes designated as members of a group reserve storage capacity to store the associated group files.

20. (cancelled)

21. (cancelled)

22. (currently amended) ~~The storage system of claim 21 wherein~~ A distributed network storage system including

a network of devices with dedicated storage media, some or all of the devices including unused storage capacity;

a storage coordinator that manages storage of network files on the unused storage capacity of the dedicated storage media, the storage coordinator designating selected groups of nodes within the plurality of nodes and directing the nodes in a given group to communicate peer-to-peer to replicate associated group files and to store the replicated files on the storage media utilizing the otherwise unused storage capacity at the respective nodes;

~~the administrative console~~ an administrative console that administers policies set by a system administrator, the administrative console providing policies to the storage coordinator and sets setting policies that determine a predetermined minimum number of storage nodes in the group; and

the storage coordinator designating the groups in accordance with the policies provided by the administrative console, the storage coordinator selects selecting at least the predetermined minimum number of nodes for each of the respective groups.

23. (currently amended) The storage system of claim ~~21~~ 22 wherein
the administrative console provides to the storage coordinator policies that
determine the locations of at least one of the nodes in a group relative to the other nodes
in the group, and
the storage coordinator selects the nodes for the respective groups in accordance
with the applicable policies concerning location.
24. (currently amended) The storage system of claim ~~21~~ 22 in which the storage
coordinator is a member of a cluster of storage coordinators that communicate peer-to-
peer and share the managing of the file storage on the plurality of file storage nodes.
25. (currently amended) The storage system of claim ~~21~~ 22 further including
a plurality of remote file storage nodes that communicate peer-to-peer over the
network;
a remote storage coordinator that manages file storage on the plurality of remote
file storage nodes, the storage coordinator designating selected groups of nodes within
the plurality of remote file storage nodes and directing the nodes in a given group to
communicate peer-to-peer to replicate associated group files; and
the administrative console providing policies to the remote storage coordinator
that govern the operations of the remote storage coordinator.
26. (original) The system of claim 25 wherein the storage coordinator and the remote
storage coordinator respectively designate groups that include both file storage nodes and
remote file storage nodes.
27. (currently amended) The system of claim ~~21~~ 22 wherein the storage coordinator
manages distributed searches of files stored in the system by designating a selected node
from each group to search through the respective group files, the storage coordinator

accumulating the search results from the selected nodes and providing the results to a requesting node.

28. (original) The system of claim 27 wherein the storage coordinator further designates selected nodes that are near neighbors of the requesting node to supply to the requesting node one or more files requested from the search results.

29. (currently amended) The system of claim ~~21~~ 22 wherein
the administrative console provides policies for access to various types of files;
and
the storage coordinator creates different types of storage lockers for files associated with different access policies and assigns all or portions of a given storage locker to one or more of the selected groups of nodes.

30. (original) The storage system of claim 29 wherein the administrative console provides policies for the different types of lockers, and the storage coordinator manages the respective locker in accordance with the policies.

31. (original) The storage system of claim 29 wherein the storage coordinator maintains file allocation tables for the respective lockers.

32. (original) The storage system of claim 31 wherein the nodes provide entries for the respective file allocation tables, the entries including links to the physical location of the respective files.

33. (original) The storage system of claim 32 wherein a given table entry includes a file Id that consists of a storage group Id, a node Id and an associated message number.

34. (currently amended) The storage system of claim ~~21~~ 22 wherein the administrative console provides to the storage coordinator replication operation policies

that relate to one or more of time constraints, interval constraints, and bandwidth constraints, and

the storage coordinator manages the replication operations in accordance with the provided policies.

35. (original) The storage system of claim 34 wherein a given node performs the replication operation by segmenting a given file into segments and sending a series of numbered messages that contain file segments to the other nodes in the associated group.

36. (original) The storage system of claim 31 wherein the nodes compress the files before replicating the files.